

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 INR-05

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 IO-03 PRS-01 CU-02 RSC-01 DODE-00

CPR-01 /045 W

----- 090674

R 080744Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7771

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0085

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT KS KIM YONG-SAM CALLS ON AMBASSADOR

SUMMARY: DURING CALL ON AMBASSADOR JAN 7 NDP
CHAIRMAN KIM YONG-SAM ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING
MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY KISSINGER DURING
HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON LATER IN MONTH. AMBASSADOR
SAID HE HAD DOUBTS MEETINGS COULD BE ARRANGED BUT HE
WOULD PASS REQUEST ALONG TO DEPARTMENT. IN ENSUING
DISCUSSION, AMBASSADOR WARNED KIM THAT ANY HARD ANTI-
GOVERNMENT LINE HE MIGHT TAKE IN HIS TALKS WITH MEMBERS
OF CONGRESS AND ACADEMIC FIGURES COULD SERVE TO
STRENGTHEN VIEW HELD BY SOME THAT US SHOULD CUT
OFF AID TO KOREA AND WITHDRAW TROOPS. END SUMMARY

1. AT HIS OWN REQUEST, OPPOSITION NDP CHAIRMAN KIM
YONG-SAM VISITED AMBASSADOR AT RESIDENCE JAN 7.
KIM SAID THAT HIS CURRENT PLANS CALLED FOR HIM TO BE IN
US FROM ABOUT JAN 21 TO 31, WITH STOPS IN LOS
ANGELES, CHICAGO, WASHINGTON, BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND
HAWAII. DURING STAY IN WASHINGTON (PROBABLY JAN
25-30) KIM HOPED TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND
SECRETARY KISSINGER AND ASKED AMBASSADOR TO ASSIST IN
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ARRANGING CALLS. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD FORWARD REQUESTS

TO DEPT BUT DOUBTED CALLS COULD BE ARRANGED DUE TO PRESSURES ON PRESIDENT'S AND SECRETARY'S TIME.

2. KIM NOTED THAT HE PLANNED TO MEET WITH VARIOUS MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, INCLUDING SENATOR KENNEDY, AND SUCH ACADEMIC FIGURES AS EDWIN REISCHAUER. HE ALSO PLANNED TO MAKE SPEECHES TO KOREAN RESIDENTS OF THE US DURING HIS VARIOUS STOPS. HE SAID HIS SPEECHES WOULD BE RELATIVELY MODERATE BUT HIS CRITICISM OF PARK REGIME IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS LIKELY TO BE TOUGHER.

3. ASKED ABOUT THE LINE HE WOULD TAKE IN HIS DISCUSSIONS IN THE US, KIM SAID HE WOULD REQUEST AMERICAN ASSISTANCE IN OPPOSITION EFFORTS TO SECURE CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION. SPECIFICALLY, HE WOULD SUGGEST THAT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ROKG, THE USG TAKE THE POSITION THAT FUTURE ASSISTANCE WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER SUCH CHANGES WERE INSTITUTED. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE COULD NOT ADVISE KIM WHAT HE SHOULD SAY WHILE IN THE US, BUT HE NOTED THAT THIS APPROACH AND ANY HARD LINE KIM MIGHT TAKE TOWARD THE PARK GOVERNMENT MIGHT STRENGTHEN THE VIEW HELD BY MANY AMERICANS THAT THE US SHOULD CUT OFF AID TO KOREA AND WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS. KIM SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THIS POINT AND AGREED THIS WAS NOT HIS OBJECTIVE. IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID HE DID NOT INTEND TO BE AS CRITICAL OF THE PARK GOVERNMENT WHILE IN THE US AS HE IS AT HOME.

4. NOTING THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO EASING OF OPRESSION IN KOREA SINCE PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT, KIM SAID THAT THERE WAS A WIDESPREAD BELIEF AMONG ORDINARY KOREANS THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD GIVEN HIS ASSURANCES OF PERSONAL SUPPORT TO PRESIDENT PARK. THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT OUR SUPPORT FOR KOREA WAS BASED ON OUR INTERESTS IN DETERRING NORTH KOREAN AGGRESSION AND MAINTAINING PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA AND NOT ON OUR PREFERENCE FOR ANY PARTICULAR GOVERNMENT IN KOREA. WE ARE AWARE THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION IN KOREA DOES NOT MEET OUR OWN STANDARDS
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OF DEMOCRACY, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, KOREA IS FREER THAN MOST NATIONS IN EAST ASIA. HE ALSO NOTED THERE HAD BEEN SOME EASING OF PRESSURES AS INDICATED BY KIM'S TRIP TO THE US AND WIDE COVERAGE GIVEN TO HIS AND OTHER OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES IN KOREAN PRESS. KIM INDICATED DOETHING LESS THAN CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION AND AT MINIMUM REDUCTION OF PARK'S POWER, WOULD SATISFY HIM.

5. SUMMING UP HIS VIEWS ON INTERNAL SCENE (AND PERHAPS INDICATING ONE LINE HE WILL TAKE IN US), KIM SAID PARK REGIME WAS GROWING INCREASINGLY UNPOPULAR AND THAT SITUATION WOULD GROW MORE TENSE IN SPRING. HE FEELS THAT PARK WILL PROBABLY BE FORCED TO PERMIT CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION BY THAT TIME. IF HE FAILS TO DO SO, KIM BELIEVES THAT THE STUDENTS, INCLUDING THOSE FROM THE HIGH SCHOOLS, WILL ENGAGE IN MASSIVE DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH COULD RESULT IN TRAGIC KILLINGS REMINISCENT OF THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN MARCH-APRIL 1960.

6. WITH REGARD TO JAPANESE PORTION OF HIS TRIP, KIM SAID HE PLANNED TO SPEND A FEW DAYS IN TOKYO BOTH ON WAY TO AND FROM US. HE SAID MEETINGS HAD ALREADY BEEN ARRANGED DURING SECOND STOPOVER WITH PRIME MINISTER MIKI, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA, AND FONMIN MIYAZAWA.

7. COMMENT: MOST DISTURBING ASPECT OF THIS CONVERSATION WAS KIM YONGASAM'S APPARENT INCLINATION TO ENCOURAGE US CONGRESSMEN AND INTELLECTUALS TO USE THE THREAT OF AID CUTS AND WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES AS MEANS OF EXERTING PRESSURE ON PARK TO REVISE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION. KIM HAD PROBABLY NOT THOUGHT THROUGH LIKELY CONSEQUENCES OF THIS COURSE, WHICH WOULD ALSO HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM PREVIOUS NDP ATTITUDES. IN ANY EVENT, HE DID NOT REFER TO IT IN JAN 8 CONVERSATION WITH VISITING CONGRESSMAN LEO RYAN.

8. ABOVE ANSWERS STATE 003596 JUST RECEIVED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ITINERARY, FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PARTY LEADERS, FORCE & TROOP LEVELS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SEOUL00085
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750007-0615
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750169/aaaaciob.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <16 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KIM YONG-SAM CALLS ON AMBASSADOR
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, KS, US, NDP, (KIM YONG-SAM), (SNEIDER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006